

2015 CIVIC POET: CALL FOR POETS

DESCRIPTION

The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture is launching a Civic Poet program. Steeped in a rich literary culture, Seattle is known as one of the most well-read cities in the country. The Civic Poet program celebrates our history and commitment to the written and spoken word and the people who have given it such a place of honor in our city. The new two-year Civic Poet post will serve as a cultural ambassador for Seattle's rich, multi-hued literary landscape and should represent Seattle's diverse cultural community. In addition to five annual performances, the Civic Poet will also complete hands-on work with communities to engage constituents city-wide. The goal of the program is to celebrate Seattle's rich literary community, while investing the future of literary arts through community engagement.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Seattle acknowledges the power of poets to strengthen communities and tell the story of the City of Seattle's residents. With this in mind, the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture seeks a Seattle-based poet to create and implement a two-year public poetry program that engages Seattle's diverse community, act as a cultural ambassador for the city, and celebrate Seattle's literary community. The position will have a budget of \$10,000 distributed over two years, inclusive of all artist fees. Applicants must be Seattle-based and eligible to work in the U.S., and have a demonstrated interest in civic engagement and the power of the written and spoken word. The application deadline is 11 p.m., Thursday, May 28, 2015 (Pacific Daylight Time).

BACKGROUND

The Civic Poet program is inspired by the previous Poet Populist program instituted in 1999 by Seattle City Council member Nick Licata. The goal of the Poet Populist program was to support the practice of literary arts democracy, and promote local literary arts organizations to a general audience citywide. The Poet Populist program was discontinued in 2008. The Civic Poet program will continue the legacy of the Poet Populist program by fostering community dialogue and engagement between the public and artists, while celebrating the literary arts.

SCOPE OF WORK

The Civic Poet will create a work plan that includes both performance and community engagement opportunities for the two-year span of the Civic Poet position. The work plan is flexible, but should include the Mayor's Arts Awards for both years (2015 and 2016), along with performances at a minimum of five municipal events annually, and community engagement opportunities which could include classes and/or workshops for adults and/or youth in neighborhoods throughout the city.

Applicants do NOT need to submit a work plan for initial application purposes. Finalists will be asked to create a work plan to present to the selection panel.

BUDGET

The budget for the two-year Civic Poet commission is \$10,000. The budget is inclusive of writing/office time, performances, event costs, materials, travel, fees, taxes and other project-related costs.

ELIGIBILITY

This call is open to Seattle-based poets who have an established body of work including published works and/or spoken word experience. Applicants must:

- be Seattle based
- be eligible to work in the US
- have a demonstrated interest in promoting equity and inclusion through the arts
- believe in the power of the written and spoken word.

Students are not eligible to apply.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

11 p.m., Thursday, May 28, 2015 (Pacific Daylight Time)

WORKSHOP

Monday, May 4, 6 to 8 p.m.

[The 2100 Building](#)

2100 24th Avenue South
Seattle, Washington 98144

Learn what makes a strong application. The session will cover specifics on eligibility and how to apply. All applicants are encouraged to attend. Space is limited. RSVP to annie.holden@seattle.gov or (206) 733-9591.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applications must include:

1. **Statement of Interest** (3000 character limit): Provide a statement describing your interest in and qualifications for the Civic Poet commission, along with an idea of what you would accomplish as Civic Poet. Address your commitment to poetry and interest in promoting equity and inclusion through the arts, as well as your relationship with Seattle.
2. **Resume**

3. **One letter of recommendation**
4. **Two poems**
5. **Demonstration of establishment within the field:** This may include proof of publication or significant performances. Please provide PDFs of publication(s) with details, and/or video or audio recordings of significant performances. Provide two examples. Video of performance is strongly encouraged. *(Please provide either two proof of publications with details, two audio/video recordings of significant performances, or one of each category. Please keep audio/video down to 5 minutes.)*

SELECTION CRITERIA

The poet will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Artistic quality & innovation
- Demonstrated interest and commitment to poetry
- Past experience with equity work
- Relationship with Seattle
- Letter of recommendation
- Demonstrated ability to engage audiences

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection panel composed of writing and literary professionals and community representatives will review materials from all applicants. Those who are selected as finalists will be invited to create a work plan to present at a panel interview. The city reserves the right not to select any artists for this commission.

The City of Seattle is committed to cultivating and sustaining a healthy and diverse cultural community. We want to ensure that the cultural richness of our city is reflected in our selection decisions.

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Poets will be notified of the results of the selection process only after the panel has recommended a poet for selection and that recommendation has been accepted by the City of Seattle. A selection will be made by the end of July.

QUESTIONS? WE'RE HERE TO HELP

For questions about the call, please contact annie.holden@seattle.gov, (206) 733-9591. For assistance with the CaFE online application process, contact CaFE tech support at (888) 562-7232 or orcafe@westaf.org, Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time.